



STATE OF CONNECTICUT • COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
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# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

## Ad Hoc Patriotic Committee

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ELLINGTON TOWN CLERK

### AD HOC PATRIOTIC COMMITTEE MEETING January 26, 2016 MINUTES

Meeting commenced at 7:06pm

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the November meeting. They were approved.

Wilson announced that he needed to step down as chairman for personal reasons. New officers were nominated. J. Wiley Dumas was nominated as Chairman, Bruce Warkentin as Vice Chairman, and Rhonda Villanova as Secretary. All nominations were approved and accepted.

#### Old Business

Wreaths Across America:

After a brief over-view of the ceremony and Foot Guard elements, Wiley asked Daniel and Rhonda for comments as new members. Daniel and Rhonda both thought the ceremony was good, well coordinated, workers attendance could be more, but overall it went well.

Cheryl addressed the media attendance or lack thereof. Wiley reminded of idea about notifying the PTOs, and community groups to promote WOA right after Memorial Day. There should be a schedule of when and whom to notify.

Wiley mentioned thanking local businesses for their donations to WOA. Cheryl suggested a "Thank you" letter to the editor. It was noted to include mentioning that 80 individuals (not listed individually) also donated. There was discussion about a 2<sup>nd</sup> follow-up letter in an effort to get 320 wreaths ordered to get 160 free to cover all the gravesites. An effort to get the word out at the Fireman's Carnival in September with a booth and information was suggested.

Bruce asked if we missed out on businesses that plan their company donations for the year in January or February. Donation requests to businesses might get a better response if sent out early in the year. The committee decided to target larger businesses (e.g., Eversource) now and individuals in the fall.

Rhonda was able to get a message out to multiple PTO board members this past year and will send a message sooner for wider distribution this year. She will also check to see if the schools may be able to include the information flyer with their school newsletters in the fall as they have been known to include event flyers for others in the past.

Wiley suggested investigating what territory we are in to be able to request donations from the various (appropriate) groups and civic organizations, whether they be the Elks, Women's Auxiliary, etc...

Cheryl asked for a list of media contacts. Wiley said Marie Sauve should have them at the town hall.

Were there any suggestions to improve the ceremony? Cheryl asked about an audio system. Wiley said the firemen were supposed to bring it. The question of patriotic music came up and it was agreed that the National Anthem was all that was needed.

It was suggested that the weather being mild this past year may have hurt attendance. There isn't really much we can do about it other than get the word out and hope for the best.

### **New Business**

Memorial Day ceremony:

Al's advice was needed to go over everything to see where assistance was needed at next meeting (February 24<sup>th</sup>). We need a speaker, preacher, coordination of groups for the parade. A mention was made concerning all the groups wanting to participate that have nothing to do with Memorial Day. Wiley mentioned a couple of people that perform in ways that educate in regards to veterans and military traditions.

Discussion about the EHS ceremony prior to the Memorial Day parade included: a slide-show, re-vamping the MIA/POW portion of the ceremony, who should make the proclamation (1<sup>st</sup> Selectman vs. Governor), and speakers vs. interviews.

Al said he would not be able to assist on stage during the ceremony this year due to health issues.

New Business:

Daniel spoke of the progress for his student replacements. He talked to Mr. Rinaldi at EHS, who spoke with AP teacher Mr. Burns, who recommended two AP Government students who are also on the football team.

Cheryl had a question re: Any interest for 9/11 events? Wiley stated that was state level activity.

There was a question re: Veteran's Day involvement; it may be too busy of a time of year due to WOA.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12pm.

Submitted by:

**Rhonda Villanova**

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Rhonda Villanova, Secretary